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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the Multicultural Recruitment Plan that was instituted at the University of New Orleans during the fall of 1999. The historical prospectus, which necessitated this plan, and some of the initial obstacles to success are reviewed extensively. A theoretical framework, primarily the SPAR (Services, Programs, Advocacy, and Research) model, created by Barbara Jacoby and Kristen Girrell (1981), is analyzed in terms of its usefulness in addressing some of these issues. Implications of the plan's overall impact on the university and the community at large are also discussed. Various strategies, programmatic interventions, and possible changes in departmental policy are analyzed in terms of their collective ability to help the University of New Orleans continue to strive toward its goal of becoming a holistically-nurturing and intellectually-stimulating environment for everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or cultural grouping. This paper is intended for people involved in the recruitment and/or retention of minority students at predominantly non-minority institutions at all levels, including policymakers, practitioners, and faculty. (Author/SM)

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University of New Orleans

Millennial Multicultural Recruitment Plan

◆◆◆ Case Studies/Model Programs ◆◆◆

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Abstract:

Multicultural Recruitment Plan

University of New Orleans: Millennial Multicultural Recruitment Initiative

Case Studies/Model Programs

This session discusses in detail the Multicultural Recruitment Plan that was instituted at the University of New Orleans during the fall of 1999. The historical prospectus, which necessitated this plan and some of the initial obstacles to its success, will be reviewed extensively. A theoretical framework, primarily the SPAR Model, created by Barbara Jacoby and Kristen Girrell (1981), will be analyzed in terms of its usefulness in addressing some of those issues. Implications of the plans overall impact on the university and the community at large will also be discussed. Various strategies, programmatic interventions, and possible changes in departmental policy will also be analyzed in terms of their collective ability to help the University of New Orleans continue to strive towards its goal of becoming a holistically nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment for everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or cultural grouping. This session should particularly benefit those who are involved with the recruitment and or retention of minority students to predominantly non-minority institutions at all levels, including policy makers, practitioners, and faculty.

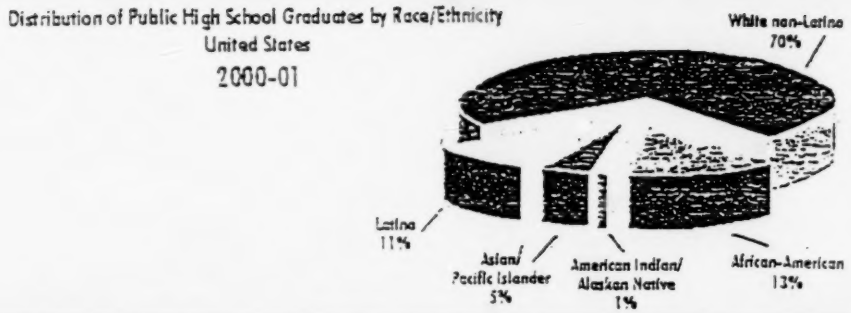
Introduction

Minority students enter higher education from diverse cultural backgrounds. As individuals and as groups, they share similar needs and concerns but differ substantially by ethnicity, customs, and level of acculturation. All minorities have in common the experience of varying degrees of discrimination, racism and prejudice. In addition, many Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans believe in maintaining a strong sense of community in which norms, values, customs, and cultural traditions are shared and reinforced. Related to this sense of community is the central role of the family. Within minority cultures, decisions are often made based on their potential outcome for the family (Wright, 1984).

Recruiting and retaining minority students are growing concerns for leaders of colleges and universities across the United States. For a brief period universities have experienced steady progress at opening doors of higher education to minority students. For example, from 1960 to 1975, the number of black students in higher education rose from 150,000 students to approximately 1 million (Green, 1989). Unfortunately, enrollments of black students have remained at a plateau. With the exception of Asian students, attrition rates of other minority groups in higher education have also remained stagnant. Furthermore, the retention rates are low for minority students who have chosen college. A report by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities found that 54% of Hispanic students and 63% of black students who matriculated into four-year colleges/universities withdrew within 6 years (cited in Wilson, 1990). Although university leaders have confronted the problems of recruitment and retention on a national level, the issues have not been resolved at the institutional level. A growing chasm reflects in the rates of participation of white and minority students in higher education. *Minorities on Campus: A Handbook for Enhancing Diversity,* published by the American Council on Education (Green, 1989, p.2-3), presented the following data related to minority participation on campuses.

Higher education's pool of students is increasingly comprised of minority youth. Of our 25 largest cities and metropolitan areas, half of the students in the public school system come from minority groups. In 1985, 20% of the school-age population was minority; in 2020, that figure will rise to 39%. African Americans constitute 12.3 % of the population but only 8.7% of college enrollment and 5.7% of college graduates. Hispanics, account for 7.7% of the population make up 4.9% of higher education enrollments and 2.7% of graduates (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1990).

Figure 1



The West had the most racially/ethnically diverse high school graduating class in 1995-96 with White non-Latinos making up 61% of all graduates (*see Figure 1, above*). The West also will be the first region to have no single racial/ethnic majority high school graduating class. In 2007-08 when the number of graduates in this region peaks, White-non-Latino high school graduates are expected to be only 50% of the region's high school graduating class. http: www.wiche.edu/rapa/hsgrad3.htm

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The focus of multicultural recruitment is extending beyond the traditional realm of high school environments. Pools of minority candidates are also concentrated in community college systems. Recruiting this clientele is a complex issue and needs a variety of programs, which are unique and fit within the framework of an institution.

In the fall of 1986, over 55% of Hispanics and 43% of the blacks attending college enrolled in two-year institutions, few of these students matriculated or graduated from four-year institutions. Community colleges are quite often the point of access to postsecondary education and professional career exploration for many ethnic minorities. Estimates reveal that 54% of all Hispanic and 45% of all black enrollments in the postsecondary sector are in two-year colleges (Woods and Williams, 1987). These students comprise 30% of the community college enrollment, yet they are the least likely groups to continue their education at four-year institutions (Watkins, 1990).

The University of New Orleans cannot examine the problem of recruitment and retention of minority students from the perspective of, " what's wrong with the student". Instead, an approach that questions our commitment to students of color and current recruitment/university initiatives for minority groups should be examined. Such introspection might lead to the systematic self-analysis needed to initiate an overall institutional game plan as opposed to a piece-meal, fragmented manner for dealing with minority recruitment and retention. Those institutions that seem to reach a level of success more often than not start at the local level and reach outward. Further, institutions that have experienced success in improving minority recruitment and retention share one common element: *they have developed a comprehensive approach for planning and coordination.* (Green, 1989). A fruitful minority student recruitment plan must grow out of the institutional mission. The mission should include, and if necessary, augmented to incorporate a commitment to valuing diversity within the institution. A successful recruitment effort will also involve several measures that apply specifically to the admissions plan.

The SPAR Model, created by Girrel and Jacoby (1981) influences the Millennial Multicultural Recruitment Initiatives presented for implementation at the University of New Orleans. **SPAR** is an acronym for ***services***, ***programs***, ***advocacy*** and ***research***. It serves as a framework for the development of a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of diverse student populations. The model is methodically arranged around basic functions rather than administrative units, the model works well in colleges where population specific offices (i.e. Office of Multicultural Affairs) or departments exists. However, it should be noted that research has proven that this model is adaptable to universities or colleges that do not have the before mentioned offices in place. Further, it demands that the institution modify its perspective to accommodate the diversity of the students it has admitted.

The SPAR Model in Application at the University of New Orleans

Services, or functions performed for students, are both general to the entire student body and specifically designed for particular groups. Each student affairs unit should ponder the following questions: *How can all services become more accessible and appropriate for all students? In addition, what specific services are provided for ethnic students?* Serve delivery methods should accommodate the full range of students' needs. In addition to assuring general access to its services, each department should provide services to meet population-specific needs.

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Services that can be implemented or improved upon at the University of New Orleans are as follows:

- Health services, for instance, should be prepared to respond to the particular health needs of women and ethnic minorities (i.e. requiring additional immunization for international students due to recurring case of certain health issues).

- Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) should function in a similar manner as the Women's Center. The OMA should become the clearinghouse for the dissemination of multicultural information and programming (i.e. providing the UNO Community with the multicultural calendar of events at the beginning of every semester so that everyone can incorporate these programs into their initiatives).

- Mentoring Programs for students of color through student groups and staff Caucasus (i.e. Student Life Buddy Program and the Black Caucus Mentor Program).

Programs are activities carried on *with* rather than *for* students; the emphasis is on the interaction and the process is two-rather than one-directional. Programs are generally more staff-intensive than services. As with services, student affairs professionals should encourage the participation of all students in a broad range of programs and should provide programs specific to the needs and interests of each student group. Programs should be designed to promote interaction with diverse populations and faculty/staff.

Activities offices and program boards should provide educational, cultural, social, and recreational programs designed for specific populations. The University of New Orleans should continue or implement the following initiatives:

- Orientation programs should include components that focus on the unique transition needs of each student group (i.e. skits prepared during orientation incorporate issues which relate to the needs of our students).

- Family-oriented activities and individualized wellness programs that appeal to adult students (i.e. Get to Know UNO, Transfer Student Open House, Annual Children's Arts Day, Adults Considering College, Toyota Families for Learning Program and Children's Day).

- General programs on career or financial aid opportunities should be supplemented by information sessions targeted for specific groups, such as re-entry women or ethnic minorities (i.e. Military, Law Enforcement Outreach and Adult Students Corporate Initiatives).

- Cultural events which emphasize diversity in cultural differences (i.e. KUUMBA Day, Multicultural Day, MLK Annual Spring Convocation, LA Indian Pow Wow, Black Heritage Ball, Latin-American Heritage Ball, Multicultural Day, International Night, International Luncheons and an Evening Lecture Series on Multicultural Issues).

- Academic enrichment programs for underrepresented minorities, (i.e. PREP Start, LEAP, LAMP, Upward Bound, Geology and Educational Talent Search).

- UNO is TOPS in Extending the Dream Program. (Extending the Dream is a new program instituted by Toya Barnes-Teamer with a grant awarded by the Southern Association for College Admission Counseling. The project involves the new TOPS program for academically qualifies students in the state of Louisiana. It assists a group of under represented graduating seniors for the year 2000, who marginally fall below the standards,

to reach the requirements to receive this scholarship allowing them access to a local college or university for the fall 2000 school year).

- Instituting an additional TRIO program, the Ronald McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program. (The Assistant Dean of Multicultural Affairs will be writing the grant for this program).

In addition to focusing programming efforts on members of student groups, positive endorsement of diversity needs development to effect, faculty, staff and other students. If the University of New Orleans is to become a multicultural and multigenerational environment, all members of the campus community must be educated about diversity and the values associated with diverse environments.

- Programs to introduce other students, faculty, and staff to various aspects of Hispanic culture could supplement programming aimed at assisting Hispanic students to adjust to the institution.

- International days or fairs can accomplish the dual purposes of bringing groups of students together in a context of mutual support and if exposing the community at large to the richness of its many cultures.

- Intrusive advising by faculty member. Glennen and associates' concept of intrusive advising seems particularly appropriate for minority students:

  To be intrusive in advising means to be duly concerned about the academic affair of one's students. The intrusive advisement system takes an aggressive approach in requiring the students to come in for academic advising at frequent intervals. It does not wait for the students to get into academic difficulty, but continually checks on their progress and provides academic support in the form of developmental course work and/or tutoring assistance in areas identified by the advisor as needing course work according to the students needs, abilities and degree plan (1985, 335). (Note: this type of advising is already occurring through the College Life/New Visions Program).

- Faculty representatives at the University of New Orleans could visit HBCU's (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and observe the institutional life of minority students. For example, the Freshman Retention Model at Xavier University. Please refer to reference one.

- OMA provides a number of community service scholarships to undergraduates across the year for students interested in developing or assisting private and public state initiatives.

Advocacy functions on *behalf of* students to insure that their needs and educational goals are recognized and integrated in planning, policy making, and practice at all levels of the institution. In order to be effective change must come from the inside out and from the top down. There is a need to incorporate students' diverseness into decisions regarding construction and renovation of facilities, allocation of revenues, scheduling of classes, organization of services and programs. Advocacy can be as complex as the creation of advisory boards to the president on issues related to women and minority students. It can also simply involve a telephone call to a department head to suggest a more effective method of reaching adult students with essential information.

In addition, UNO's student affairs professionals should take the lead in educating campus colleagues about the diversity of students and the implications of that diversity.

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- Student Affairs professionals can increase the sensitivity of clerical and service workers to the cultural norms and expectations of different students they will encounter.

- Cohorts with community agencies are essential in ensuring that students' needs are considered in the development of transportation, housing, childcare polices and other initiatives.

- Diversity in Admissions Committee, DAC, serves as an advisory board on issues pertaining to the recruitment of minority students in the Metropolitan New Orleans area.

- Student Life's Diversity Institute serves to train faculty, staff, and students with an interest in learning about diversity.

UNO's faculty should take the following initiatives in their departments in respect to minority students.

- Faculty should foster the multiplicity of student learning styles as they develop curricular and instructional strategies.

- The unique cultural heritages of Hispanics, Asians Americans, and American Indians embrace as members of smaller ethnic groups or tribes (i.e. the College of Urban and Public Affairs sponsors the Native American Institute Of Louisiana-addresses issues and problems of Native Americans living in rural and urban areas.

- Aggressive recruitment, including obtaining lists of potential candidates from institutions that produce significant numbers of doctoral minorities.

- Using "grow on your own programs". Universities across the country are utilizing their graduate school candidates as future faculty/staff.

- Publishing in media outlets used, seen or read by a predominant minority audience (i.e. Black Issues in Higher Education, Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, etc.).

- Joint appointments with other departments and/or local minority institutions.

- UNO/Xavier University School Leadership Center for Greater New Orleans. An institute established to provide professional development for school principals.

- Using visiting professorships and endowed chairs to recruit senior faculty from minority groups.

- Using post-doctoral fellowships to make permanent faculty positions more appealing to minority applicants.

At the intersection of race and gender, stand women of color, torn by the lines of bias that currently divide white from nonwhite in our society, and male from female. The worlds these women negotiate demand different and often wrenching alliances. Consequently, women of color face significant obstacles to their full participation in and contribution to higher education.

Today, women constitute 52% of all people enrolled in college in the U.S. and nearly 55% of the minority enrollment. In the last decade, women of color have significantly increased their enrollment in college in greater numbers than their male counterparts. In other words, women currently comprise over 59% of the black enrollment, 52% of the Hispanic enrollment, and 55% of the

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American Indian enrollment. Asian/Pacific Island women constitute 45% of the enrollment of their ethnic group-a tremendous numerical gain in the last 10 years. (National Center for Educational Statistics http://www.nces.ed.gov)

Women of color will display greater accomplishment in higher education as UNO addresses the following issues effectively:

- The impact of ethnic and women's studies upon the design of curricula and extracurricular activities for women of color on campus.
- The importance of role models and campus climate in developing positive self-concepts among women of color.
- The impact of affirmative action/equal opportunity policy on all women's access to and performance in institution of higher learning.
- UNO Women's Center "Workships" for non-traditional women students. The workships will award in state tuition and fees to all recipients and are renewable yearly.
- The impact of current trends in education (such as the shift from liberal arts to more professionally oriented education) on women's career choices.
- The importance of critical life events to women's achievement in college.

Research on student characteristic, satisfaction and success is necessary in order to determine the types of services; programs and advocacy are needed or expendable. Closely related to research is evaluation of both services and programs. Research and evaluation provide a vital foundation for practice, substantiate calls for action, and support requests for funds and staff. Valuable data can be gathered by simple addition of key variables to institutional data already collected upon admission or at registration (age, employment status, residency, ethnic origin. Examination of data can reveal necessary information to implement change.

- Activities staff can determine whether commuter or minority students in proportion to their presence within the student body attend programs.
- Counselors (i.e. admissions, personal counselors, advisor, etc.) can keep track of the kinds of issues raised by students in specific groups
- Studying the class schedules of commuter students reveals the best times for programming.
- Comparing the retention rates of students in different majors can determine the academic assistance or career support needed.
- Formal assessments of needs and studies of institutional satisfaction.
- Informal methods of research, telecounseling, yield quantifiable data.
- The Campus Diversity in Admissions Committee to Academic Affairs ' annually reviews the university's successful commitment to multicultural issues.

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- Research career for Minority Scholars (RCMS), a National Science Foundation grant funds this collaborative program with Xavier University that recruits promising minority students to participate in graduate science programs.

An Example of How the SPAR Model Can Be Applied to a Particular Student Group

ADULT STUDENTS

	Services	Programs	Advocacy	Research
Orientation				
Activities				
Counseling				
Union				
Career Planning				
Financial Aid				
Health				

Source: Adapted from B. Jacoby and K. Cowell, 1981. Reprinted by courtesy of the NASPA Journal.

An Example of How Student Affairs Professionals Can Apply Each Aspect of the SPAR Model to the Various Student Groups

ADVOCACY

Women	Encourage women students to consider majors and careers in "nontraditional" fields
Minorities	Advocate for faculty and staff hiring policies to increase representation of minorities
Adults	Encourage faculty awareness of adults preferred learning styles
Commuters	Work to assure that recreational facilities are open at hours convenient for students with limited time on campus
Internationals	Promote campus-wide activities which recognize and celebrate international cultures
Students with disabilities	Work to make facilities and programs accessible and welcoming

Source: Adapted from B. Jacoby and K. Cowell, 1981. Reprinted by courtesy of the NASPA Journal.

The University of New Orleans should maintain a long-term commitment to self-examination, and then implement this model to help participants become more knowledgeable about the various racial/ethnic cultures, women's culture, and interaction with the majority culture. This means reviewing all policies and programs to see if they reflect and consider each person regardless of unalterable group characteristics. It means designing an individual institutional plan for ongoing review and changing the curriculum to incorporate courses that reflect scholarship on women and ethnic/racial minorities. It means having faculty, administration and staff who represent the new majorities as well as the old, to teach and establish the appropriate learning environment for the diverse student body that we serve.

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For the 1999-2000 year, we plan to:

- Enhance our relationship in the areas of multicultural concerns on the University of New Orleans campus (i.e. Office of Multicultural Affairs, Office of Retention, Black Caucus, Office of International Students and Scholars, the Dutch Morial Chapter ,Office of Student Activities, Career Development and Placement)
- Operate as a liaison between these associations and prospective underrepresented students
- Help to foster positive relationships between the University of New Orleans community and prospective/currently enrolled underrepresented students through the Campus Diversity Advisory Committee to Academic Affairs
- Enhance our recruitment efforts through the Diversity in Admissions Committee in the areas of college fairs, high school visits, special programs, telecounseling, marketing and public relations
- Assist in accessing the needs of underrepresented groups on the University of New Orleans campus, which can contribute to our ability to recruit and retain underrepresented students

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